



THE VISN VOICE



March 2008

I THOUGHT YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW

Mr. Garfunkel

As I write this short article, I am in Chicago attending the 2008 Congress on Healthcare Leadership of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE). I am pointing this out to emphasize the importance of ongoing education and professional affiliation.

As a health care executive, I have been affiliated with ACHE for over 30 years.

It has provided me with ongoing education, as well as professional

credentials by challenging me to increase my skills, and requiring me to pass a difficult examination and to write several case studies to advance to Fellowship status. In recent years, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has used affiliation with an organization like ACHE as one criteria for administrative advancement.

I am writing all of this, not to talk about myself, but to emphasize the importance of both continuing

education and professional affiliation in the health care field. We are all in very fast changing professions, and the more we keep up with the changes (whether by reading, attending classes, going to professional meetings, etc.), the more effectively we can do our jobs.

VISN 5 should be, and in many ways is, a learning organization. I urge everyone to be part of this important effort.

Editors Note:

How to contribute to the VISN VOICE NEWSLETTER

The VISN Voice is a monthly network publication, a source of educational and informational articles for employees, volunteers, and veterans of the VA Capitol Health Care Network.

Submit your information via e-mail to [VISN5 Employee Newsletter](#) on Outlook by the end of the month for the following month's publication. Please do not send PowerPoint or Published documents—use Word. Please include the following information: name, title, service, facility, and reason for submission. Submissions should not exceed 350 words. The editor reserves the right to make edits to any submission chosen for publication, and not all submissions will be chosen for publication.

Ken Sliker—Editor

Special points of interest:

News From Around the Network

Washington DC VAMC

VAMHCS

VISN5 Service Area

WASHINGTON DC VAMC NEWS

Dr. Richard B. Rosse Named One of America's Top Doctors



The Washington DC VAMC, is proud to report that Dr. Richard B. Rosse, Chief, Psychiatry Service, has been selected as one of the region's "Top Doctors for 2008" by Castle Connolly Medical Ltd., a health care research and information company that publishes the *Guide to America's Top Doctors* and *Northern Virginia Magazine*.

Dr. Rosse is not new to this type of accolade, having previously been selected as one of "America's Top Doctors" from 2001 through 2006. He is also the recipient of the "Thayer Award for Excellence in Medical Student Teaching" and the Department of Psychiatry "Residency Teaching Award" from Georgetown University School of Medicine.

Castle Connolly's "Guide to American's Top Doctors" assists consumers in selecting the most qualified doctors and hospitals for medical treatment. Castle Connolly updates the guide annually through a nomination and selection process.

The doctors are nominated by their peers. The nomination is followed by a comprehensive review and verification of credentials by Castle Connolly's research team. Criteria for consideration include professional qualifications, excellence in patient care, and excellence in academic medicine and research.

Dr. Rosse has been interested in psychiatry since the tender age of eight years. "I always wanted to be a psychiatrist. I wanted to understand how the mind and brain worked to the fullest extent possible. I wanted to be able to apply that knowledge to help patients in distress. I am honored to be able to apply this to the veteran population here at the Washington DC VAMC."

Dr. Rosse began fulfilling his passion for psychiatry at the University of Maryland, where he graduated in 1976. He received his undergraduate degree in zoology, following his interest in the study of common themes in behavior throughout the animal kingdom.

Upon graduation, he continued his studies at the University of Maryland School of Medicine and earned his Doctor of Medicine degree in 1980. He completed his residency in Psychiatry and Neurology at Georgetown Medical Center Department of Psychiatry in 1984. Thereafter, Dr. Rosse served as Chief of Outpatient Mental Health Services from 1998 through 1999. He also served as Chief of the Georgetown University Medical School Teaching Unit at the Washington DC VAMC from 1986 through 1994.

Dr. Rosse held the position of Chief of Psychiatry, Consultation Liaison Services, at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, DC, from 1994 through 1998. He is a published author of over 200 original scientific articles and book chapters, reviewer for several medical journals and wrote a best-selling medical textbook, *Laboratory Diagnostic Testing in Psychiatry*. In addition to his duties as Chief, Psychiatry Service, at the Washington DC VAMC, he is a Professor of Psychiatry at Howard University in Washington, DC.

WASHINGTON DC VAMC NEWS



VA Medical Center Celebrates Black History Month DC Councilman Kwame R. Brown, Guest

By Michelle Spivak

The Washington DC VAMC held its annual celebration of Black History Month on February 28 with music, movies, poetry, and a special program with guest speaker DC Councilman-At-Large, The Honorable Kwame R. Brown.

In his first visit to the VAMC Councilman Brown expressed his pride in the contributions of Black veterans to this nation and declared his appreciation of the Washington DC VAMC and its staff for their service to veterans.

Councilman Brown said, “We cannot and should not minimize the contributions of the men and women who have served our country with valor and distinction.” Brown added that, “as far back as the American Revolution, African-American’s

history of service to this country is well documented.”

An African drumming performance by children from the Studio School, a Washington, DC, based charter school, had the standing-room only audience singing and clapping along. Moving musical performances were presented, including an inspirational number by Ms. Bonnie Burnette. Delicious “soul food” was provided to all in attendance.

Representatives from the DC Chapter of the National Association of Vietnam Era Veterans and National Association of Black Veterans also attended.

The medical center was honored by the presence of World War II Veteran and Tuskegee Airman, Curtis Robinson, who authored the recently published book, *A Pilot’s Journey*, about his exploits.

Veteran participants of VA’s National Creative Arts Festival, Carla Renee and Gina Marioneaux, offered poetry readings to veterans and visitors. The film *Proud*, which tells the story of the Tuskegee Airmen was presented to staff at two separate sessions.

Mr. Mike Dunfee, Associate Medical Center Director, said, “This Medical Center has the privilege of serving veterans of every race, color, creed, and nationality. Here we recognize that we, together, created a great nation on the foundation of liberty for all. We value each individual’s uniqueness. We respect each individual’s heritage. And, today we honor the contributions of African-Americans to the liberty we cherish, the rights we revere, and the country we call home”.

VA MARYLAND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM (VAMHCS) NEWS



Maryland Veteran Motivated to Run Cross Country *By Michael Dukes*

For many avid runners, marathons are no major challenge. Running across the state of Maryland is a little more daunting, but running across the country is usually more of a nightmare than a dream.

Vietnam Veteran and VA Maryland Health Care System patient, Eugene Roberts, is not your usual runner. Each year he runs in the Marine Corps Marathon, and he even ran across the state of Maryland before. Now he's taken his running to the next level. In July of 2007, he started from Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base in California, on a cross country run that will finish at the Baltimore VA Medical Center this spring. It's a laudable endeavor

for any seasoned runner, but even more remarkable is the fact that Roberts has two prosthetic legs!

The former high school track star said he is motivated by Jesus, and he refuses to let his war injuries stop him from achieving his dreams. Roberts is currently running through Alabama. A welcoming celebration is being planned for when Roberts completes his journey at the Baltimore VA Medical Center this spring.

The staff in Prosthetics Service at the VA Maryland Health Care System have been working with Roberts to coordinate health care "pit stops" along his journey across the country. Due to the unprecedented use of his

prosthetics, VA medical staff must make regular adjustments to his legs and sockets, and the soles of his feet have to be replaced after constant pounding on the pavement. As with any distance runner, Roberts also gets his share of blisters and minor injuries. VA Medical Centers across the country have been quick to accommodate the VA Maryland Health Care System patient during his cross country journey. This is a great example of how the VA and the VA Maryland Health Care System is going the "extra mile" to provide world-class health care services to our nation's veterans.

VA MARYLAND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM (VAMHCS) NEWS



Vasco Palmer (right), a Persian Gulf War veteran, receives instruction on the proper method for casting a fly fishing rod from Ed Nicholson (left), the President of Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc.

Fly Fishing Provides Therapeutic Benefits for Veterans *By Margaret Hornberger*

Representatives from Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc., recently provided a demonstration on the therapeutic benefits to be derived from fly fishing to hospitalized veterans and outpatients at the Perry Point VA Medical Center, a division of the VA Maryland Health Care System. Each participant had an opportunity to practice casting a fly fishing rod and to learn the technique of fly tying.

Founded in 2005 by the Federation of Fly Fishers and Trout Unlimited, the mission of Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing Inc., is to aid in the physical and emotional recovery of wounded or injured military personnel through the art of fly fishing.

According to Ed Nicholson, Project

President, "The act of fly fishing and fly tying helps disabled veterans to rebuild their fine motor skills and improve balance while in a relaxed outdoor setting other than in a hospital, thereby enhancing their overall rehabilitation".

First introduced at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center to disabled active duty personnel, Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing Inc., is now expanding to offer its services to military hospitals and VA Medical Centers across the nation.

"We are looking forward to working with members of the Patapsco Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited to implement this rehabilitation program at the Perry Point VA Medical

Center," said David Otto, Supervisor, Recreation Therapy. "Disabled veterans who transition from the fly fishing program with the Department of Defense to the Department of Veterans Affairs will now experience a seamless transition with the continuity of this therapeutic recreation program".

A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

In fiscal year 2007, VA hired over 9,000 veterans, the most of any year on record. I ask that every VA employee continue the effort to make the Department the leading agency in the employment of veterans.

Helping veterans transition from military to civilian life after service to our Nation is one of VA's foremost commitments in our mission "to care for those who have borne the battle." The success of this commitment depends on VA's employment outreach efforts.

On that note, I am proud to announce the establishment of the Veterans Employment Coordination Service (VECS) in VA's Office of Human Resources Management. The mission of this service is to attract, recruit, and hire veterans into VA, particularly severely injured veterans returning from the Global War on Terror. VECS, led by Director Dennis May, will work to ensure that veterans are able to successfully enter VA's workforce and that VA managers and supervisors are fully aware of special hiring authorities that can be used to hire veterans.

In November 2007, VA first announced plans to hire 10 full-time Regional Veterans Employment Coordinators. These regional coordinators will work collaboratively with local coordinators in Human Resources offices VA-wide to provide direct hands-on assistance to veterans in accessing career opportunities at VA.

At a time when members of our Armed Forces are being asked once again to sacrifice in defense of our great Nation, it is important that VA continue to set the example for others in the manner in which we honor the service of men and women in the military. Please join me in taking the next step to enhance employment opportunities for veterans in VA – Hire the veteran!

-- James B. Peake, MD

What is IntegratedEthics?

A national education and organizational change initiative that provides a comprehensive approach to ethics in health care. IntegratedEthics is designed to improve ethics quality across VHA.

IntegratedEthics addresses ethics quality at all levels—at the level of decisions and actions; at the level of the systems and processes that drive decision making; and at the level of the values, environment, and culture that shape ethical practices overall. Deeper still are the organization’s ethical environment and culture, that sometimes shape ethical practices overall. It is the unspoken messages beneath the surface, the things that everybody knows about but doesn’t talk about, that is significantly important because it’s really the groundwork for everything else.

Why does VA need IntegratedEthics? VA needs to ensure that ethics is valued just as much as other organizational priorities. When ethics quality in an organization is high the organization benefits in many ways: through increased employee morale, higher patient satisfaction, and greater productivity and efficiency. Ethics consultation can even help the bottom line by reducing length of stay and costs

among high-risk patients.

What is an IntegratedEthics program? Effective ethics programs must do three things well: respond to ethics concerns on a case-by-case basis, address ethics issues on a systems level, and foster an environment and culture that is conducive to ethical practice.

Local IntegratedEthics programs achieve these goals through three

- core functions
- ethics consultation
- preventive ethics
- ethical leadership

In addition to ethics consultation, preventive ethics, and ethical leadership coordinators in each facility, an IntegratedEthics Program Officer is responsible for day-to-day operations and an IntegratedEthics Council coordinates ethics-related activities across the organization.

IntegratedEthics: Closing the Gap

From . . .	To . . .
• Isolated pockets of ethics activity	• Comprehensive, organized program
• Ad hoc, variable processes	• Systematic, clear standards
• Reactive, case-based	• Proactive, systems-focused
• Limited assessment of effectiveness	• Improvement-oriented, accountable
• Rules	• Rules + values

VISN 5 Employee Newsletter

Editor-Ken Sliker
VISN 5

Contributing Editors

Molly Ann Majka
VISN 5

Michelle Spivak
Washington DC VAMC

David Edwards
VAMHCS

Michael Dukes
VAMHCS

VA Capitol Health Care
Network, VISN 5

849 International Drive,
Suite 275
Linthicum, MD 21090
Phone: 410-691-1131
Fax: 410-684-3189
E-mail:
[VISN5 Employee Newsletter](#)

VISN 5 IntegratedEthics (IE) Points of Contact (POC):

Ms. Donna Custer
VISN 5 CBI Officer
304-263-0811, Ext. 4874

Facility IntegratedEthics(IE) Program Officers:

Ms. Jeanie Henderson, AA/COS (Martinsburg VAMC)
304-263-0811, Ext. 4015

Ms. Joyce Edmondson, CBI Officer (VAMHCS)
410-642-2411, Ext. 6211

Mr. Daniel Day, Social Worker (Washington DC VAMC)
202-745-8000, Ext. 4148

VISN 5 Service Area



Facility Numbers

Baltimore VAMC

1-800-463-6295

VAMHCS Telephone Care Line

1-800-865-2441

Perry Point VAMC

1-800-949-1003

Prescription Refill & Clinic Appointment

1-800-463-6295, ext 7395

Baltimore Rehab & Extended Care Center

1-800-463-6295

Martinsburg VAMC

(304) 263-0811

Medical Advice Line

1-800-817-3807 or (304) 262-4855

Patient Eligibility

(304) 263-0811, ext 3758/3757

Monday—Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Or ext. 3050 after 4:30 p.m.

Prescription Refill

(304) 263-0811, ext. 4870 (all hours)

Washington DC VAMC

(202) 745-8000

Patient Service Center

(202) 745-8247

VETS Information

(202) 745-4046

PTSD Clinic Number

(202) 745-8591

Cambridge, MD

(410) 228-6243

Fort Howard, MD

(410) 477-1800

Hagerstown, MD

(301) 665-1462

Alexandria, VA

(703) 313-0694

Franklin, WV

(304) 358-2355

Charlotte Hall, MD

(310) 884-7102

Glen Burnie, MD

(410) 590-4140

Loch Raven, MD

(410) 605-7650

Harrisonburg, VA

(540) 442-1773

Petersburg, WV

(304) 257-5817

Cumberland, MD

(301) 724-0061

Greenbelt, MD

(301) 345-2463

Pocomoke City, MD

(410) 957-6718

Stephens City, VA

(540) 869-0600

Washington, DC

(202) 745-8685

Visit us on our website at [www.va.gov/VISN 5](http://www.va.gov/VISN5)